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ANALYSIS

OF THE

EVIDENCE TAKEN BEFORE THE FACTORY

COMMISSIONERS,

&c. &c.

247126 e. 280

A N A L Y S I S
OF THE
EVIDENCE TAKEN BEFORE THE FACTORY
COMMISSIONERS,
AS FAR AS IT RELATES TO THE
POPULATION OF MANCHESTER,
AND THE VICINITY,
ENGAGED IN THE COTTON TRADE.

READ BEFORE THE STATISTICAL SOCIETY OF MANCHESTER,
MARCH, 1834.

MANCHESTER:
BANCKS AND COMPANY.

1834.



BANCKS AND CO. PRINTERS, EXCHANGE-STREET.

ANALYSIS, &c.

IN consequence of the excitement produced by the publication of the *exparte* evidence taken before Mr. Sadler's Committee of 1832, on the state of the Factory Population, a number of individuals engaged in manufactures demanded, and at length obtained, from the tardy and reluctant justice of their country, the appointment of a Commission to investigate the case, where alone it could be fairly and thoroughly examined, in the manufacturing districts themselves.

The evidence thus obtained is contained in three parliamentary volumes, consisting of 1617 folio pages. In this form it is quite inaccessible to the public, and the information it contains is consequently little known. In the hope of reducing it to a form which shall put it within the reach of every one, we have attempted the following Analysis, which we have endeavoured to render more distinct and intelligible by dividing the subject into different branches, and considering separately the evidence that bears on each; carefully sifting the *facts* and *observations* stated by the witnesses, from the mere *speculative opinions* they express. We have

analysed the testimony of every witness, except in a very few cases, where it was so vague and contradictory as to be utterly intangible.

The Evidence may be conveniently arranged under the following heads :—

- I. The *Health* of the Factory Population.
- II. Alleged *Fatigue* arising from the long hours of labour.
- III. Alleged *Cruelty* towards the Factory Children.
- IV. State of *Education*.
- V. State of *Morality*.
- VI. Wages and Poor Rates.

I.

HEALTH.

The evidence regarding the state of health among those employed in factories, and the effect of their occupation on the constitution, is various and conflicting, but very full. The Medical Commissioner, Dr. Hawkins, on whose examinations we should naturally be most disposed to rely, gives but very few ; and the report which he prefixes to them, is too vague and general to supply this deficiency. He states that he examined 800 children at two Sunday schools in Manchester, and gives the result as follows :—*

* I. I, H. p. 2.

Of 400 in factories—	Of 400, <i>not</i> in factories—
86 had <i>bad</i> health,	22 had <i>bad</i> health,
153 — <i>middling</i> health,	106 — <i>middling</i> health,
161 — <i>good</i> health.	272 — <i>good</i> health.
—	—
400	400

This table would have been more satisfactory, if Dr. H. had stated on what he founded his classification, and whether or not the pale appearance of the children entered into his estimate. In the same page he gives a similar table, which leads to a very different conclusion. Of 1190 adolescents examined in 13 factories, 787 had *good* health, 311 had *middling* health, and 92 only had *bad* health. Hence it appears by the first table that *one-fifth* of the factory children had bad health, and by the second only *one-twelfth*. Dr. Hawkins imagines the reason of this discrepancy to be, that several of these 13 factories were situated in the country districts, and not in Manchester.

In the third, or supplementary report, Dr. Hawkins fortunately gives a tabular view of the state of health in several *cotton* factories he examined, which we have analysed, and the result is as follows:—*

MALES.	FEMALES.
122 had <i>good</i> health,	162 had <i>good</i> health,
94 — <i>middling</i> health,	82 — <i>middling</i> health,
29 — <i>bad</i> health.	27 — <i>bad</i> health.
—	—
245	271

* Whether these are a part of the 13 factories previously mentioned, we have no means of ascertaining.

Thus, only *one-eighth* of the males, and *one-tenth* of the females enjoyed bad health in the cotton factories examined by Dr. Hawkins.* The examination of these tables presents us with two important results. *First*, they show that the health of females employed in cotton mills is better than that of males; and *secondly*, that the proportion of healthy workpeople is always greatest in the largest factories.†

Dr. Hawkins seems to have been a good deal struck with the pale and delicate appearance of those engaged in factories. That this impression arose from a want of comparison with *other* inhabitants of large and dirty towns, appears from the following remark of one of his fellow commissioners:—"In Bennet-street Sunday School I made a comparison of the factory and non-factory children, by separating each at different sides of the school-room, and contrasting in this way more than 1000 children; but neither myself nor my colleagues could detect the smallest difference in their personal appearance. I also made the same comparison, with the same results, in two other schools."‡

It appears from Dr. Hawkins' report, (which is confirmed by the other Commissioners from all parts of the country,)§ that those employed in factories enjoyed a singular exemption from the cholera;|| and it

* III. H. p. 260, et seq.

† "I invariably found that the *large* factories were those in which the general health, comfort, and convenience of the workmen were most attended to, and where they were best off in every respect.—III. T. p. 207.

‡ III. T. p. 198.

§ III. T. p. 107.

|| II. H. p. 3.

appears from the evidence of other medical men, that the same exemption extends to the influenza, and to infectious disorders generally.*

Dr. Hawkins also states,† on the authority of Mr. Robertson, that in Manchester, 54 out of every 100 die under five years of age; while in country places the proportion is only 32 per cent. This, however, is contradicted by two surgeons at Bolton, and partially by a physician at Stayley Bridge.‡

In concluding his report, Dr. Hawkins seems to state that the defective health which, he conceives, *does* exist amongst the factory population generally, is *not* a necessary result of their occupation; for he states, that in some factories he could see no desire nor necessity for legislation, and no dark shades in the condition of the people. §

Thus far the report, though not so definite as could be wished, tends to prove that the population employed in factories is, from some cause or other, infe-

* II. T. p. 56.

† II. H. p. 5.

‡ T. p. 119, and p. 142.—In order to give the public an opportunity of comparing the alleged mortality of Manchester with that of other places, we subjoin the per centage of deaths under five years of age, as follows:—

In Essex.....	32 per cent.	} These are taken from Parliamentary documents, as condensed in Marshall's Statistical Tables. They are however notoriously defective.
London.....	38 —	
Carlisle	47 —	
Bolton	49 —	
Stockport.....	49 —	
Leeds.....	53 —	

§ II. H. p. 5.

rior in health to that which follows other occupations : but when we come to the evidence of the operatives themselves, and of resident medical practitioners, the statements become more conflicting, and the preponderance is decidedly the other way. Almost all, however, agree that, in general, children employed in factories are paler and less healthy *looking* than others.* This is nothing more than was to have been expected; paleness of complexion being an almost invariable concomitant of in-door occupation in a warm atmosphere.

One question frequently put to the witnesses by different examiners, was, " Whether the factory population were degenerated in appearance, and stunted in growth ?" The answers to this question are somewhat remarkable. Of *six* operative witnesses examined, *three*† declare that they can perceive a very distinct deterioration in size and appearance, while *three* others declare positively the contrary.‡ Of *eight* others examined, *three*§ state that the growth of factory children is greatly stunted by their occupation, and Dr. Hawkins evidently leans to this opinion ; but the remaining *five* assert this to be a total mistake, and declare that factory children are as well grown as any others living in large towns.|| This last opinion is confirmed by

* Mr. Tuffnell's statement (III. T. p. 198) is, however, an exception.

† I. C. p. 49. I. T. p. 15, &c.

‡ I. C. 41—43. I. C. p. 54, &c.

§ I. C. p. 49. I. T. p. 3. I. T. p. 13, &c.

|| I. T. p. 52. I. T. p. 53. I. T. p. 128, &c.

some tables given by Mr. Cowell, who had the patience to try a large and laborious experiment to decide this controverted point. This gentleman actually measured upwards of 1,000 children under 18 years of age, and carried his calculation to three places of decimals to insure finding *some* result—and the result was this:—*

	Inches.		Inches.
Boys in factories, measured	55·28	Girls in factories, measured	54·951
— not in factories.....	55·56	— not	54·976
	<hr/> ·28		<hr/> ·028

Thus it appears that the difference in stature between the factory and the non-factory population, is appreciable only by a species of micrometrical measurement, being in the case of boys $\frac{28}{1000}$, and in that of girls $\frac{28}{1000}$ of an inch. One of the witnesses above quoted,† declared that the race was degenerating so fast, that in a short time the people “would be absolute dwarfs.” It would be a curious problem to discover, from the above data, in what length of time his prophecy will be realized.‡

In *weight*, however, the difference between the two classes is more decided, being in the case of boys 3·5 lbs., and in that of girls 0·3lbs.§ On this one of the Commissioners remarks—“This result is just

* I. C. p. 88.

† I. T. p. 15.

‡ Thus; if in 40 years since the cotton trade was established, they have degenerated $\frac{28}{1000}$ of an inch, in what length of time will they have lost 12 inches? The answer is, in 17,140 years!!!

§ I. C. p. 87.

what might be expected, inasmuch as factory labour requires no muscular exertion whatever ; consequently, many of the muscles are never fully developed, and the additional weight which their developement would give to the body is lost. If their employment was more laborious than it is, they would doubtless weigh heavier.*

One of the most important questions to be decided was—"Whether the factory population had worse health than those engaged in other occupations?" this being, in fact, the real gist of the whole enquiry. *Twenty-six* witnesses were questioned on this point, and the analysis of their evidence is as follows:—*Fifteen* declare that, to the best of their knowledge and observation, the factory population are as healthy as those engaged in other occupations.† One says, "there are other occupations that are better, and some that are worse for the health, than factory labour;"—and two qualify their statements by saying, "factory labour is as healthy as any other occupation in a large town." Of these *fifteen* witnesses, *ten* are operatives, *three* are surgeons, and *two* are resident ministers.

Six witnesses,‡ on the other hand, declare that "factory people are not generally so healthy as others." *Two* of these are recruiting officers, the rest are operatives.

* III. T. p. 119. It is curious to observe that, to judge by both the above tables, girls are affected by their occupation just *ten times less* than boys.

† I. C. p. 41—43. I. C. p. 61. I. C. p. 63 and 71. I. C. p. 97. I. T. p. 49 and 52. I. T. p. 110. I. T. p. 118, 120, 133, and 143, &c.

‡ I. C. p. 36—38. I. C. p. 52. I. C. p. 133. I. T. p. 3. I. T. p. 59.

The evidence of one witness, Charles Aberdeen, as it is couched in the strongest language, and has excited the greatest amazement, must not be passed over. This individual states "that he has seen men *die daily* in the card room;" or, as he afterwards qualifies the phrase, "he has seen them daily carried out gasping for want of breath."* Fortunately for the credit of the factory to which this evidence refers, two of his fellow-workmen came forward, and contradicted his statements in the most positive and explicit manner;† adding the further piece of information, that Charles Aberdeen was dismissed from the factory because he persisted in distributing Carlile's pamphlets among the workpeople. And to put the cope-stone to his own character and credit, he commences his evidence by refusing to take the oath—declares that he does not believe in a God—that he formerly lived with Carlile and the Rev. Robert Taylor—and that nevertheless he is a moral character!

Three witnesses come forward to prove a rather remarkable fact, but which is now, we believe, pretty generally admitted, viz., that the health of delicate, and more especially of scrofulous children, frequently improves after entering a mill;‡ and that many children find employment in mills, who would, from the state of their health, be unequal to, and unfit for, any other occupation.

* I. T. p. 1.

† I. T. p. 24.

‡ I. C. p. 63. I. C. p. 71. I. T. p. 133.

We now come to some very interesting and conclusive evidence given by *three* surgeons at Bolton, and a physician at Stayley Bridge.* Their practice has been extensive and long continued, and their statements are in substance as follows :—They do not find the high temperature of mills injurious, if there is no want of ventilation ;†—they find the factory workers *not* an unhealthy class—much less so than their pale complexion would lead many to imagine. Scrofula is not frequent in mills ;—asthma and bronchitis, but not generally to a serious degree, are often found among those who work in the card rooms. The principal complaints among the factory population are of a pulmonary kind,‡ but they are not more subject to disease generally than out-door labourers. Parturition is by no means difficult among factory women ; and this statement is confirmed by two midwives examined by Dr. Hawkins;§ one of whom states, however, that more miscarriages happen among factory women than among other classes. Lastly, as a fact on which to found a general deduction, it is proved that there are some mills near Bolton which receive full medical and surgical assistance for the consideration of a halfpenny a head per week ; and in another case, about 100 factory children are attended for the sum of twenty pounds a year;|| and it does not appear that the sur-

* I. T. p. 118, p. 143. II. T. p. 56.

† For confirmation, see Sir David Barry's Report. II. B. p. 143, &c.

‡ See also III. H. 234. § II. H. p. 11, p. 13. || I. T. p. 22, p. 32,

geon (who lives seven miles distant) considers this an imperfect remuneration, as the contract has remained unaltered for 40 years.

Perhaps, however, the strongest, clearest, and most conclusive evidence given in the whole of the three volumes, on either side the question, comes from the secretary of a sick club in Bolton, which has been established eighteen years, and though its members only subscribe a penny a week, is now in possession of funds to the amount of £500.* It consists of 563 members, of whom there are

From factories 274—Relieved in sickness	70—Died	5	} For two Years.
Not from Do. 289—Ditto	Ditto	175—Dito 20	
<hr/> 563	<hr/> 245	<hr/> 25	

Thus, though *half* the members are from factories, but little more than *one fourth* of the sick, and only *one fifth* of the deaths are from the factory subscribers.§

In addition to this, in the third Report,† Dr. Mitchell gives a number of tables to show the average quantity of sickness per man per annum, in several different occupations. The result is highly instructive.‡

* I. T. p: 136.

† III. p. 48—59.

‡ In drawing out the above comparative tables, we have included only the *male* population of mills, because in the cases introduced for comparison, *males* only are employed; and because the time lost in *accouchements* renders the returns for females wholly unavailable.

§ In the third Report, Dr. Hawkins gives a table of all those whose employments are distinctly registered, admitted into the Manchester Hospital in 1832; from which it appears, that of 1046 patients, 208 only belonged to the factory classes, while 838 were drawn from other occupations.—III. H. 287.

	DAYS SICKNESS.
In the Staffordshire Potteries, up to the age of 61 years	9. 3 per man.
„ Silk Mills	7. 8 „
„ Woollen Ditto	7.08 „
„ Flax Ditto	5. 9 „
„ Cotton Mills in Glasgow	5. 6 „
„ East India Company's Servants	5. 4 „
„ Labourers in Chatham Dock Yard	5.38 „
„ Lancashire Cotton Mills	5.35 „
„ Ditto Ditto Ditto, under the age of 16 years..	3.14 „

The replies to questions respecting the alleged deformity induced by factory labour, are contradictory and perplexing. *Thirteen* witnesses speak to this point; of whom *seven** declare that they have seen others crippled, or been so themselves, in consequence of working in mills;—while *six* others,† chiefly operatives, affirm that they do not know of any instances of deformity so caused, and cannot perceive that factory labour has any such tendency. The truth most probably is that instances of deformity have *formerly* been caused, when a child has entered with a weak frame, or at too early an age, into an ill-regulated factory. Mr. Tuffnell remarks,‡ “all the seriously deformed persons sent to me were *adults*, nor did a single instance of a *child* badly deformed by its work come under my notice. The reason is this, many years ago it was the practice to work much longer hours than at present, and several persons who were injured by over work *at that time* are to be met with.” The same Commissioner elsewhere

* I. C. p. 90. I. T. p. 5, p. 15. II. T. p. 26, p. 63. II. H. p. 17, 18.

† I. C. p. 94. I. T. p. 26, p. 46. I. T. p. 122, p. 118. II. T. p. 30.

I. T. p. 23.

‡ III. T. p. 200.

remarks that the collieries and pin-heading manufactories, which often produce grievous deformity, are entirely passed over by our humane legislators.*

We will conclude this branch of the Analysis with that species of evidence on which it appears to us that most emphasis ought to be laid, viz. the testimony of the operatives themselves, as to the actual effect of factory employment on their *own* health, and that of their children; for it is remarkable that some witnesses, while they think that others suffer from the occupation, allow at the same time that *they* are not of the number.† Of *sixty-nine* operatives in cotton mills, those who were examined on this point, *eleven* only declare that their health has suffered;‡ while the remaining *fifty-eight* affirm, *not only that their own health has been remarkably good, but that of 134 children belonging to them, and engaged in the same occupation, all have enjoyed a similar exemption from sickness and disease.*§ The clearness and precision with which this evidence is given so remarkable, that we will quote a few specimens:

“CHRISTOPHER BIRCH, has worked in a factory 45 years—has never lost an hour from sickness since he began to work—has had thirteen children, of whom ten are working in cotton mills—has never had to

* III. T. p. 206, p. 225. I. T. p. 82.

† I. C. p. 52.

‡ I. C. p. 33, p. 75. 84. I. T. p. 5—9. 11.

§ I. C. p. 58.—61. p. 63, p. 71, p. 85. 94. 96. 97. 98. I. T. p. 26, p. 53, p. 57. 72. 74. 75. 76. 77. p. 110. 114. 117. 120. 122. 126. I. T. p. 133. II. T. p. 40, p. 61.

employ a medical man for any of his family, except now for his wife, who is sick of the influenza.”*

“THOMAS MENZIES, has worked in a cotton mill 36 years—has never lost an hour from sickness—has had seventeen children, of whom eight are living, and work in cotton mills.”†

Seven witnesses then came up together who have worked in cotton mills from 25 to 53 years respectively; and while some have never lost a day from sickness, the most sickly of them all *has only lost five weeks in 42 years.*‡

“JOSEPH BEAUMONT, has worked in a cotton mill 28 years, and has been ill fourteen days in that time, *just half a day per year*—his five children have worked for 10 years, and been ill *one day.*”§

“JOHN HOPWOOD, has worked in a mill 45 years—has *ten* children working in cotton mills—they have had 14 days illness among them the last *ten* years.

These extracts might be greatly multiplied, for almost all the fifty-eight speak the same language. But the above will suffice as specimens. In conclusion then, it is proved by a preponderance of *seventy-two* witnesses to *seventeen*—that the health of those employed in cotton mills is nowise inferior to that in other occupations;—and, *secondly*, it is proved by the tables drawn up by the secretary of a sick club, and the more extensive ones of a London actuary, that the health

* I. C. p. 98.

† I. C. p. 98.

‡ I. T. p. 57.

§ I. T. p. 74.

of the factory population is decidedly *superior* to that of the labouring poor otherwise employed.—*Thirdly*, it is proved that girls suffer less than boys from factory labour; and, *fourthly*, that children suffer less than adults.* Surely the opinions which have lately been propagated are little in consonance with these results.

II.

FATIGUE.

Considerable difficulty appears to have been experienced in ascertaining whether or not the children feel much fatigued in the evening after twelve hours' work in factories;—a question which at first sight appears to involve no difficulty whatever. Almost all who have been superficially acquainted with factories, or who have heard them described, agree in their opinion that children *must* be greatly fatigued with so many hours' standing and exertion; but the operatives themselves are by no means so unanimous in their statements of the *fact*. Dr. Hawkins states in his Report,† that a large number, both of boys and girls, “declared that they had no desire to play about on the Saturday and Sunday, but preferred remaining quiet,” in consequence, (we presume him to mean, from the context,) of the fatigue of the previous week. Among *forty-three* witnesses, however, who were examined on this

* See Table at page 14.

† II. H. p. 2.

point, only *nine* affirm the children to be much fatigued at night;* and one of this number, after declaring that the children feel little inclination to attend evening school owing to having been so long on their legs, qualifies his statement by the remark, “that they are like *wild Irish* when they come out of the mill.”† Now, as we have always understood that the wild Irish were remarkable for the exhibition of any thing rather than depression and fatigue, we conclude there must be some mistake as to the meaning of the witness’s expressions; and that he must intend to say, that the children resemble wild Irish—not in their fatigue, for the wild Irish are never fatigued, but—in their disinclination to attend evening school, in which the wild Irish quite sympathise with them.

To set against the evidence of these *nine* witnesses, we have the depositions of *thirty-four*‡ others, also operatives, that the factory children are not much fatigued at night;—that they show considerable alacrity in attending evening schools, and are not remarkable for drowsiness over their lessons; and that they frequently play about after the day’s work is done. *Three* of these witnesses state, what we can readily believe, that the children are always more fatigued after a day of play than after one of work;§—and another individual declares that “there is great difficulty in

* I. C. 50, 51, 71. I. T. p. 3, 8, 15. II. H. p. 10, 17.

† I. T. p. 4. ‡ I. C. p. 36, 40, 41, 47, p. 130. I. T. p. 22, 23, 55, 74, 77.

§ I. T. p. 23, p. 111.

getting children to bed in proper time, they are so lively.”*

The natural conclusion from all this appears to be, that *weakly* children are fatigued by twelve hours' labour, but that healthy ones are not.†

III.

ALLEGED CRUELTY TO CHILDREN.

On this point we are glad to say the evidence is clear, uniform, and explicit; for while all the witnesses, with *four* exceptions,‡ declare that ill-treatment of children in mills is a thing unheard of and unknown, a large majority allow that spinners do not unfrequently beat their piecers, (who are generally their own children);—they also declare that this corporal punishment is not more severe, perhaps less so, than what is received at home and at school;—that it is never allowed by the master, and that if a spinner is detected in its infliction, he is generally severely reprimanded, or dismissed.§ Two of the exceptions we have noticed are from the same mill; they affirm that they have

* I. T. p. 120.

† Sec. III. T. p. 196. Where one of the Commissioners says: “The inevitable conclusion from all this evidence is, that the reason which has been so prominently put before the Public, in favour of the Ten Hours' Bill, is wholly groundless;—that children in cotton mills are *not* injured by their labour,—are *not* overworked.”

‡ I. C. p. 75. 78. 79. I. T. p. 2.

§ I. C. p. 33. 38. 47. 51. 54. 59. 65. 72. 96. 97.

I. T. p. 5. 11. 21. 30. 47. 49. 53. 74. 79.—82. p. 108. 115.

been beaten "as hard as the spinner could lay it on," one says for five, and the other for ten minutes together, so that they were confined at home in consequence. There is however a tone of careless exaggeration which pervades the evidence of both these witnesses, which inclines us to receive it with the greatest caution; and one of them, John Wilson, meets with positive contradiction from three of his fellow-workmen.*

A case was mentioned before Mr. Sadler's Committee, in which a child was alleged to have been *worked in chains*. Mr. Cowell examined this case at great length, and we will give his conclusion in his own words.† "I have to remark on the foregoing set of examinations, that the girl is certainly a very bad, lying girl. I hardly know what to say of the mother. Swanton (the overlooker) I believe meant no harm, and the weighting the girl gave her no pain. It was an ignorant, stupid device of his, to prevent her running away, but not cruelly intended. The story of her being compelled to work is not only a gross exaggeration, but any man who is a spinner must have known the absolute impossibility of a girl working at throstle spinning with a weight on her back."

In conclusion we will only give the statements of another Commissioner on this subject.‡ "To the accusation of cruelty I can give the most decided, and unqualified denial. It is not only *not true*, but *cannot* generally be true."

* II. p. 65. 66. 67. † I. C. p. 114. ‡ III. T. p. 193.

IV.

ON THE ALLEDGED IMMORALITY OF
THOSE EMPLOYED IN FACTORIES.

The witnesses whose evidence bears upon this point, are the following:—Forty-eight Operatives, three Clergymen, one Unitarian Minister, two Overseers of the Poor, and one Clerk to the Manchester Bench of Magistrates; in all fifty-six witnesses.

The substance of the evidence of forty-five of the operatives is this :—*

That some of them have heard much improper language among the boys and girls in the factories in which they have worked, but only two say that they have ever seen any gross improprieties of conduct, and agree that such conduct, when observed, is always checked by the other hands, That different factories, however, differ much in the character, language and conduct of those engaged in them. That the natural tendency of the boys and girls working together during the whole day is much checked by the presence of

* C. I. 37.

— 41.

— 53.

— 85.

— 95.

— 99.

— 130.

T. I. 108.

— 3.

— 5.

C. III. 179.

C. I. 35.

— 39.

— 45.

— 49.

— 77.

C. III. 167.

— 177.

T. I. 3.

— 5.

fathers, brothers, or near relations, and on the other hand is vastly aggravated by the practice of night work in the Mills.* And that on the whole the children who work in factories are not more immoral than those engaged in other trades, or who remain unoccupied at home. On this last point thirty-eight out of the above forty-five witnesses, agree in their opinion.

The evidence of the remaining witnesses is somewhat more detailed, and requires more particular notice.

The Rev. JAMES BROOKES,† Unitarian minister at Hyde, has resided at Hyde 27 years. The moral state of the people has improved during that period. Is decidedly of opinion that the people employed in factories in this district are quite as sober and moral as those employed in other trades. In the Sunday Schools under his care about nine-tenths of the children are employed in factories. They are more regular in their attendance at School, and quite as apt to learn. Knows some mills in that neighbourhood where the work-people are remarkable for their moral habits and intelligence. Considers the condition of the neighbourhood in regard both to the circumstances of the working people, and the care bestowed on Sunday schools is greater than it ever has been, and that the tone of morals of the rising generation is improving.

Rev. WM. HUNTINGTON, Rector of St. Johns.‡ Has

* This practice however now appears to be very rare.

† I. T. 45.

‡ I. T. 49.

lived in Manchester six years. Thinks the character of the factory children quite as good or better than that of children otherwise employed or idle. Thinks a larger proportion of factory children attend Schools than others.

Rev. JOHN PICCOPE,* Rector of St. Paul's. Has lived in Manchester all his life. In the Sunday Schools under his controul, there are about 4000 children. Of these about seven-tenths of those employed at all, are factory children. Thinks the character of factory general, as good as that of children otherwise employed, or idle.

Rev. HENRY FIELDING.† Was Chaplain to the Manchester prison, from 1825 to 1830. Thinks the factory population not more addicted to crime than others. Thinks from his experience that the factory system has no tendency to injure the morals of those engaged in it.

JOHN BUTCHER,‡ Overseer of the Poor for Salford Hulme, and part of Manchester. Believes the character of the factory children to be better than those otherwise employed or idle, as they have not so much opportunity of becoming depraved.

JOSEPH HALTON,§ Assistant Overseer of the Poor for the township of Stockport, which situation he has held for nearly 16 years, renders an account of the illegitimate children affiliated in that township from 1825 to 1832. In the year 1831 the female popula-

* T. I. 51. † T. I. 52. ‡ T. I. 62. § C. I. 73.

tion of all ages in Stockport, was 13,248. In this year there were 35 affiliations for illegitimate children. Of these, 24 belonged to women engaged in factories, and 11 to women otherwise employed. Witness thinks that the number of women engaged in factories is about six times the number of those who are employed in any other way; according to which, as is remarked by the commissioner Mr. Cowell, for every 11 illegitimate children born of non-factory women, there ought to be 66 instead of 24, born of factory females, to make the numbers proportionably equal. Witness never observed this fact before, but thinks that factory girls have not the opportunities of mixing with bad company that others have, in consequence of being employed all the day, and being tired and glad to go to bed when they get home. As regards generally the comparative moral habits of the factory and non-factory women, the witness says he really cannot draw a conclusion respecting it.

OSWALD MILNE,* has been clerk to the Manchester bench of Magistrates for 25 years; states, that in the charges brought before the magistrates, there are not more factory operatives in proportion to their numbers than any other class. That the spinners are a more orderly set than labourers or hand-loom weavers, and that factory children are by no means worse than those of other classes of the population.

In opposition to the general tendency of the above

* I. T. 67.

evidence, which, with the exception of the statements of six witnesses, agrees entirely on the general point of the character of the factory population not being worse than that of those engaged in other occupations, one witness* appears who gives evidence of a very contrary nature. The name of this witness is Simeon Cundy, formerly an operative, and employed in several different mills up to the year 1812, since which time he has been engaged on his own account as a Cotton Broker. His evidence is to the following effect. That since he became connected with Manchester, in 1793, the morals of the operative class have undergone a very extensive change for the worse—that drinking has been a growing evil in both sexes—and that on the point of female morality, if asked his opinion as to the number out of a thousand factory girls, between the ages of 14 and 20, who were unchaste, he should not feel any hesitation in saying that *three-fourths* of them were so.

It is but fair to state, that the evidence of Simeon Cundy being repeated to a subsequent witness,† who had been a piecer and spinner for thirty-two years, states that he believes the women employed in factories to be as prudent as those employed in other trades, and that as to the statement of the above witness, “it is as gross a falsehood as ever was uttered.”

Of 53 witnesses who are asked their opinion as to the comparative morality of those engaged in factories,

* C. I. 56. † I. T. 108.

with those otherwise employed, 46 affirm their belief that the character of the factory population is equally good with that of other trades, and 7 that it is worse than others.*

With respect to another question that is put to several of the witnesses, viz:—what sort of wives the factory girls make?—there is considerable diversity of evidence, some stating that they make very bad wives, can neither sew nor wash, and are entirely ignorant of all domestic duties—while others, and these the greatest number, say that they have time enough to learn these duties, if they are so inclined, that many make up the linen of their fathers and brothers, as well as the whole of their own clothing, and that they are more active and diligent than girls otherwise brought up. The inference from the whole evidence appears to be, that they are too often ignorant of domestic economy, but that otherwise they make very good wives, and that men engaged in mills generally prefer them.†

*The whole number of witnesses examined on the point of morality is 56, but of these, three give no opinion as to the *comparative* character of the factory population.

In the female Penitentiary of Manchester, from July, 1829, to May, 1833, the number of unfortunate girls admitted was 50. Of these only *eight* had been connected with factories, and *twenty-nine* had been domestic servants. See. III. 298.

† C. I. 37.	C. I. 96.	T. I. 9.
39.	97.	15.
53.		54.
72.		56.
86.		62.

EDUCATION.

Much has been said in and out of Parliament about the defective education and consequent ignorance of the children employed in cotton factories. It was therefore very desirable that this point should have been thoroughly examined, and that the results founded on extensive enquiries laid before the public. We are sorry however that the evidence on this point is very scanty, and we are surprised that it should be so, as there could not have been any difficulty in obtaining abundant information upon the subject, in every part of the Lancashire district. The evidence that has been taken however as far as it goes is very favourable on this point.

Three witnesses are examined who are connected with Sunday Schools. One witness states that in the schools under his care there are about 1000 children, of whom *seven tenths* are factory children. Another states that out of 1000 children in the schools he superintends, *nine tenths* work in factories. A third, that out of 4000 children in his schools, *seven tenths* of those who are employed at all, work in factories. In the Sunday Schools* of Stockport, there are 4932 children. Of these 584 are too young to be employed any where. Of the remaining 4348, 2668 are factory children.

* I. T. 45. 49. 51.

† Returns III. 158.

Population of Stockport in 1831 was 25,469.

In Mr. Ashton's Mill* at Hyde, there are 1175 hands employed. Of these 87 cannot read. 512 can read only, and 576 can read and write.

In Mr. Ashworth's mills† at Turton there are 532 persons employed, of whom 525 can read 247 can read and write, and seven who have been recently engaged from other employments, cannot yet read.‡

VI.

POOR RATES.

We think that important evidence upon the state of comfort and general respectability among the population engaged in factory labour, may be afforded by ascertaining how far they are accustomed to depend upon parochial relief. On this point the evidence is short, but most decisive. Two overseers of the poor are examined, one from Salford, another from Gorton, a township near Manchester, containing 2600 inhabi-

* T. I. 83.

† Central Commission, p. 5.

‡ From the enquiries instituted by the Statistical Society of Manchester, it appears that in that town 36,000 children are taught in the Sunday Schools of all denominations.

The report of the Poor Law Commissioners recently published tends to shew that if the manufacturing population are in a state of deplorable ignorance, as has sometimes been asserted, they are at least not *peculiar* in this respect. Mr. Villiers, in North Devon, found not less than one fourth of the Overseers of the Poor who were unable to read, and he mentions one Overseer who had not that qualification, and yet was intrusted with the distribution of rates to the amount of £7000 a year. Another revising Barrister says, that "in the eastern side of Leicestershire, where the population is *exclusively agricultural*, he met with a

tants. Both these witnesses agree that the factory people require less aid from the parish than others, and that they are in all respects in a more comfortable condition. In Gorton, where about 700 people are employed in factory labour, only one has applied for relief during three years. The factory that employs these people pays one-fourth of the whole rates, which generally amount to upwards of £800.*

In the township of Hyde, in the year 1801, when machinery was first introduced into it, the population was 830—the estimated value of the property assessable to the poor rate, £693—and the sum levied for the relief of the poor was, £533.

In 1830 the population was about 7000, the assessable value of property £2727, and the poor rate £550.†

In Stockport,‡ in the year ending March, 1833, the number of families who received parish relief was 651; and the amount distributed among them was £2447. Of these 65 families were connected with factories; and the sum distributed among them was £297., leaving £2150. to be divided among 586 families, who had *no* connection with factories—and this too in Stock-

degree of ignorance he was utterly unprepared to find in a civilized country." There is much more evidence in this Report to the same effect. See Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, p. 286. It is curious to compare these statements with the above evidence relative to Mr. Ashton's and Mr. Ashworth's mills.

* I. 62.

† T. 87.

‡ I. C. 73.

port, which is one of the most exclusively manufacturing towns in the cotton district.*

VII.

WAGES.

In the last report, returns are given from 151 mills in different parts of the Lancashire district, in answer to a list of questions sent down by the central committee in London, about a year ago, and now first collected and laid before the public, from which it appears that the total number of persons employed in the above mills is 48,645. Of this number, 10,541 are children under 14 years of age. The average weekly wages of the whole number employed is 10s. 5d., and the wages of the children under 14 is 3s. 10d.

* The inference that must be drawn from this evidence is strongly confirmed by a comparative Table of the Poor Rates in the different Counties of England and Wales, contained in the Tables of Revenue and Commerce recently published by Government, in which it appears that the amount levied for the relief of the poor compared with the population, is less in Lancashire *than in any other county in the kingdom*, being only 4s. 8d. per head, while in some of the agricultural counties it amounts to 16, 17, 18 shillings, and even 20s. 11d. per head.

	s.	d.	
Cumberland.....	5	8	per head.
Westmoreland.....	9	3	„
Oxfordshire.....	18	0	„
Sussex.....	20	11	„
Middlesex.....	10	1	„

At Preston, of 266 paupers now in the workhouse only 25 have ever been employed in factories. Of 656 paupers now in the Manchester workhouse, only 51 have ever been employed in factories. See Hawkin's Report II. p. 4.

The total number of persons employed in cotton factories is stated to be 212,800, whose whole yearly wages will amount to £5,777,434.*

† This then is the evidence given before the Commissioners for the manufacturing district of Lancashire. We believe that those who have received their impressions of the injurious tendency of the factory system from the reports that were so industriously circulated upon the subject some months ago, will be not a little surprised by the results which this evidence establishes. We confess that we are so ourselves; but in concluding the task imposed on us by the Society, we cannot help expressing our conviction, that the principal charges alleged against the factory system, are here most triumphantly refuted. It appears to be fully proved by the foregoing evidence that the health and morals of the people employed in cotton mills, are at least equal to that of those engaged in other occupations in the towns in which they are situated;—that the long hours of labour do *not* over fatigue the children, or injure their health and constitutions;—that the general charges of cruelty and ill-treatment, which have been so repeatedly alleged, are entirely ground-

* Stanway's Tables III. 140 and 124.

† We have not entered upon that part of the evidence which relates to the state of foreign manufactures and their competition with our own, partly because it is neither full nor satisfactory, and partly because our object is an enquiry into the state of the manufacturing population, not into the probable effects of legislative restrictions upon the manufactures themselves.

less;—that the education of the factory children, as compared with others, is more* carefully attended to;—that the poor rates are lower in Lancashire than in any other county in the kingdom;—and that the wages of labour are such, as in the agricultural districts, would be regarded as positive opulence. The inapplicability of the factory bill to such a state of things must be evident to all who will compare the two, and can only be accounted for by the fact, that the Central Committee in London drew up their first report and framed the present bill in accordance with the statements therein contained, when only a small portion of the evidence had become known to them—that the second volume of evidence appeared several weeks subsequent to this period,—and that the third supplementary volume which contains much important information, materially affecting the merits of the whole question, made its appearance at the end of March, 1834, *seven months after the Bill had passed into a law.*

* We have already remarked that the evidence on this subject is scanty, but as far as it goes it fully bears out the above statement.

Names of witnesses who think that
Factory labourers are *not* more immo-
ral than other classes.

- C. 37. Jane A. B.
41. Mrs. B.
53. L. S.
85. Sarah Parkin.
" Mary Oldham.
99. William Smith.
" Thos. Menzies.
95. Richd. Marsh.
130. Jas Unsworth.
Thos. Kitts, &c. in all 28
witnesses.
T. 108. John Belshaw.
" John Bethel.
45. Rev. Jas. Brooke.
49. Rev. W. Huntingdon.
51. Rev. Jno. Piccope.
52. Rev. H. Fielding.
62. Jno. Butcher.
129. Ralph Stanley.
67. Oswald Milne.
Thos. Somerfield. III. C. 179.

Operatives.

Names of witnesses who think they
are so.

- C. 45. Jno. Redman.
49. Titus Rowbottom.
39. Jane H. C.
T. 3. Jno. Hodges.
5. Jno. Pilkington.
C. 56. Simeon Cundy.

Operatives.

Those who only speak to the fact of
having heard improper language.

- C. 35. Jane L.
77. W. W.
Jon. Ambray. 177.
Jno. Ainsworth. C. III. 167.
Favourable 46
Unfavourable 7
Negative 3

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